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LETTER DATED 4 JULY 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the excesses committed by Turkish forces in northern Iraq during the recent operations, which are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the rules of international law, treaties and relations of good-neighbourliness between the two countries.

1. The raid launched by the Turkish armed forces on 20 March 1995 on northern Iraq was conducted by five brigades from the units operating in the southern region of Turkey, in addition to two brigades from the Special Forces and reinforcements from the Third Army, including the Fifth Infantry Brigade, units from gendarmerie formations, more than 500 tanks and 100 armoured personnel carriers, numerous Air Force fighter aircraft (F-16s and F-4s) and numerous helicopters.

2. The attack operations launched by the Turkish forces extended over the border strip and penetrated 40 kilometres inside Iraqi territory in some areas, covering Ibrahim al-Khalil, Zakho, Faysh Khabur, Amadiyah, the Matinah wa-Baykhayr mountain range, Sidkan, Qasrok, Darkar Ajam, Sarsank, Batufah and Kani Masi.

3. On 20 March 1995, Turkish aircraft bombed a number of villages in several areas in Sindi subdistrict, Zakho district, killing the citizen Arif Rasul Muhammad and wounding other citizens, Amin Rasul, Rasul Muhammad, Ahmad Muhammad Arif and Nariman Sa'id. On the same day, while searching the areas of Shara'ish and Darkar Ajam in Sindi subdistrict, Zakho district, the Turkish forces put pressure on the inhabitants for purposes of intelligence-gathering and stealing cash, gold and property, seized personal weapons, fired at citizens, causing the death of two, and seized five others, whom they carried off into Turkish territory.

On 30 March 1995, the Turkish forces seized four farmers near a village in Dohuk governorate, made them leave their farm and then fired at them, killing two.

On the same day, the Turkish forces searched a village in Sarsank subdistrict, held the inhabitants captive, and two days later released the women. On the next day, six male corpses were found on the ground near their village, and it was ascertained that they had been killed by the Turkish forces. Their names are as follows:

1. Abd al-Rahman Muhammad Sharif;

2. Isma'il Muhammad Sharif;

3. Muhammad Fattah Hasan;

4. Abd al-Qadir Izzat;

5. Sartib Abd al-Qadir Izzat;

6. Abdullah Zakari Hasan.

On 5 April 1995, a dispute arose between elements from the Turkish Society of the Red Crescent and relatives of the above-mentioned slain men. This developed into a shoot-out between the relatives of the slain men and the Turkish forces, resulting in the killing of five Iraqi citizens, namely:

1. Hasan Muhammad Sharif;

2. Umar Muhammad Sharif;

3. Hamid Muhammad Sharif;

4. Abu Bakr Muhammad Sharif;

5. Utman Kalli Zakari.

4. The Turkish forces set up armed check-points on the roads in Dohuk governorate, searched citizens and restricted their movement on the pretext of searching for elements belonging to the Kurdistan Workers' Party. Many citizens were seized, and their fate is still unknown. Check-points were set up on the following roads:

(a) The Sarsank-Amadiyah road;

(b) The Amadiyah-Shiladiza road;

(c) A number of locations on the Zakho-Batufah-Baykufah-Kani Masi high road.

5. The Turkish forces are preventing farmers from working on their farms in most villages and have carried out search operations in the villages and residential complexes of Zakho district, as follows:

(a) On 16 April 1995, they surrounded the residential complex in the Bersivi area of Sindi subdistrict, searched the houses of the complex after

ejecting the inhabitants, confiscated sheep and distributed them to the Turkish forces.

(b) They searched the village of Hayzawah on the Zakho-Batufah road, after cordoning it off, prevented citizens from engaging in their daily work and adopted schools in villages and townships as headquarters for their forces, putting a halt to any study activities.

(c) In the course of search operations in a number of villages in the Sindi plain, Zakho district, the Turkish forces demolished a number of citizens' houses, alleging that they had cooperated with elements belonging to the Turkish Kurdistan Workers' Party.

(d) On 21 April 1995, the Turkish forces broke into the house of a citizen in Zakho district, attacked him and members of his family, confiscated his private automobile and also broke into a number of shops and carried off the proprietors for interrogation.

(e) On 22 April 1995, Turkish aircraft bombed the villages of Narmak and Riwan located to the north-east of the township of Batufah, Zakho district, 16 kilometres inside Iraqi territory. The bombing caused damage to a bridge over the Khabur river and to a number of houses in the two villages and set fire to farmland.

(f) On 22 April 1995, they confiscated a flock of sheep at the Darkar Ajam complex in Sindi subdistrict, Zakho district, and the sheep were distributed to the Turkish military units. The Turkish forces also occupied the Darkar Ajam boys' school and girls' school and turned the first into a detention centre for citizens from the area and the second into Turkish officers' quarters, which put a halt to studies in the two schools in question.

(g) On 23 April 1995, the Turkish Army authorities detained citizen Hamid Yunis Mulla Ahmad in Zakho district without justification.

6. The Turkish forces have also engaged in the following practices against the inhabitants of villages and residential complexes:

(a) Search of houses and detention and disappearance of men;

(b) Seizure of livestock and its utilization to transport ammunition and supplies to Turkish units in locations not easily accessible by highways;

(c) When searching the houses of citizens, Turkish soldiers confiscate personal property (cash and gold), inasmuch as the search operations are carried out after the occupants have been ejected from their homes and the men separated from the women;

(d) Seizure of private weapons belonging to citizens of remote areas, who keep them for self-defence and to protect their property and livestock against predatory animals.

These practices and acts of aggression directed against citizens of Dohuk governorate have caused them to live in a state of fear and terror throughout the period of the armed operations.

7. The camps of Turkish Kurdish refugees have been moved from the border areas to Atrush camp, and large numbers of Iraqi citizens have fled from the Iraqi villages of Banak, Barwari and Duski to towns and townships further inside Iraq because of the Turkish forces' invasion of the areas.

8. Although the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirmed in its statement of 5 May 1995 that the Turkish armed forces had withdrawn and returned to their bases on 2 May 1995, information indicates the presence of Turkish forces to the approximate strength of one brigade inside the Iraqi borders and scattered in small groups over some of the border outlets.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq protests vehemently against the violation of its territorial integrity and the inviolability of its civilian inhabitants and their property and requests you to intervene as dictated by your responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations in order to ensure the withdrawal of the remaining forces and to prevent the repetition of such acts of aggression.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative